

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the non-final Official Action mailed August 19, 1999 (Paper No. 9). Reexamination and reconsideration in light of the above amendments and the following remarks are courteously requested.

By the forgoing amendment, the specification and claims have been amended. Additionally, new claims 4 to 36 have been added and original claims 2 and 3 have been cancelled. Thus, claims 1 and 4 to 36 are currently pending for the Examiner's consideration.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. This rejection is rendered moot by the cancellation herein of claim 2.

With regard to the prior art, the Examiner rejected claim 1 as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) by any of Umeda et al. ("Umeda"); Seppanen; Wiwakanond et al. ("Wiwakanond"); or Corbett et al. ("Corbett"). For at least the following reasons, these rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1, as amended herein, recites a system for controlling a manufacturing production line using a virtual

kanban system and a manufacturing execution system comprising:

said manufacturing execution system for automatically controlling routing of product lots and production inputs in said manufacturing production line based on a production scheduling model, wherein feedback data from said production line is provided to said manufacturing execution system;

a database for storing said model and said feedback data, wherein said feedback data is used to provide values for variables of said model; and

a simulating system for simulating operation of said production line according to said model, said simulating system using said feedback data from said database in performing said simulation, said simulating system further comprising a user interface through which changes to said model can be made;

wherein said manufacturing execution system monitors consumption of said production inputs and orders additional production inputs using electronic kanbans which are cycled in response to said feedback data.

In contrast, none of the cited prior art references appear to teach or suggest a manufacturing execution system controlling a production line based on an electronic model, wherein feedback data is provided to the manufacturing execution system and made available to a simulating system for evaluating and amending the model on which the system operates in conjunction with an electronic kanban system.

"A claim is anticipated [under 35 U.S.C. § 102] only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of

California, 2 U.S.P.Q.2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987) (emphasis added). See M.P.E.P. § 2131. Consequently, the rejection of the claimed invention based on the four cited references is no longer appropriate and should be reconsidered.

Additionally, the newly added claims are believed to recite subject matter which is also not taught or suggested by the prior art of record. Examination and appropriate allowance of these claims is, therefore, respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, the present application is thought to be clearly in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration of the application in light of these remarks is courteously solicited. If the

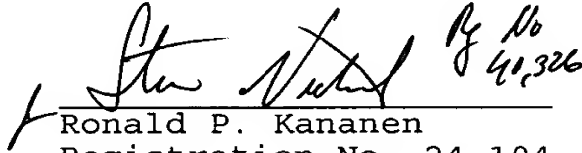
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Examiner has any comments or suggestions which could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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